

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the captioned application.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1 – 18 (Cancelled)

Claim 19 (new): A personal assistance apparatus comprising: a base frame supported from a floor surface by a plurality of wheels distributed around the perimeter of an interior area; a linear actuator having a translation axis secured to said base frame at an alignment position with said base frame for substantially normal intersection of said axis with said floor surface within said interior area; and, a load platform having a seat plane secured to said linear actuator for selective translation to and from a low position that is substantially within said interior area and where said seat plane is substantially contiguous with said floor surface.

Claim 20 (new): A personal assistance apparatus as described by claim 19 wherein said linear actuator is inclined to a vertical plane for translation of a rising load upon said platform toward an apparatus center of gravity.

Claim 21 (new): A personal assistance apparatus as described by claim 19 wherein the axis of said linear actuator is inclined to a vertical plane at about 5° for translation of a rising load upon said platform toward an apparatus center of gravity.

Claim 22 (new): A personal assistance apparatus as described by claim 19 having a wheel braking mechanism for restricting rotation of at least one of said wheels, said braking mechanism being resiliently biased to a wheel disengagement position.

Claim 23 (new): A personal assistance apparatus as described by claim 22 wherein said braking mechanism is operated to restrict wheel rotation by a brake

engagement element of said linear actuator.

Claim 24 (new): A personal assistance apparatus as described by claim 23 wherein said breaking mechanism comprises a brake linkage that is engaged against a resilient bias by a structural portion of said linear actuator.

Claim 25 (new): A personal assistance apparatus as described by claim 24 wherein said structural portion of said linear actuator is positioned on said linear actuator to engage said brake linkage as said seat plane approaches said floor surface.

Claim 26 (new): A personal assistance apparatus as described by claim 25 having a retainer mechanism to continue engagement of said breaking mechanism with said wheel against said resilient bias after said linear actuator withdraws said seat plane from said floor surface.

Claim 27 (new): A mobile lifting device having a base frame supported from a floor surface by a plurality of wheels distributed around the perimeter of an interior area, a linear actuator having a translation axis secured to said base frame at an alignment position with said base frame for substantially normal intersection of said axis with said floor surface within said interior area and a load platform having a load support plane secured to said linear actuator for selective translation to and from an low position that is substantially within said interior area and where said load support plane is substantially contiguous with said floor surface.

Claim 28 (new): A mobile lifting device as described by claim 27 wherein said linear actuator is inclined to a vertical plane for translation of a rising load upon said platform toward an apparatus center of gravity.

Claim 29 (new): A mobile lifting device as described by claim 27 wherein the axis of said linear actuator is inclined to a vertical plane at about 5° for translation of a rising load upon said platform toward an apparatus center of gravity.

Claim 30 (new): A mobile lifting device as described by claim 27 having a wheel braking mechanism for restricting rotation of at least one of said wheels, said braking mechanism being resiliently biased to a wheel disengagement position.

Claim 31 (new): A mobile lifting device as described by claim 30 wherein said braking mechanism is operated to restrict wheel rotation by a brake engagement element of said linear actuator.

Claim 32 (new): A mobile lifting device as described by claim 30 wherein said braking mechanism comprises a brake linkage that is engaged against a resilient bias by a structural portion of said linear actuator.

Claim 33 (new): A mobile lifting device as described by claim 32 wherein said structural portion of said linear actuator is positioned on said linear actuator to engage said brake linkage as said seat plane approaches said floor surface.

Claim 34 (new): A mobile lifting device as described by claim 33 having a retainer mechanism to continue engagement of said braking mechanism with said wheel against said resilient bias after said linear actuator withdraws said seat plane from said floor surface.

Claim 35 (new): A mobile lifting device as described by claim 34 wherein said retainer mechanism is manually operated to release said braking mechanism from engagement with said wheel.